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ABSTRACT

This resource guide is designed to assist members of the Massachusetts university community in handling sexual harassment complaints. The guide outlines what constitutes sexual harassment, suggests responses to sexual harassment, and lists resources. The scope of the guide includes faculty/student harassment, employer/employee harassment, and peer harassment. It covers cross-cultural issues, university responsibility, public education, and examples of sexual harassment with sample resolutions. The guide concludes with 13 references and a list of Boston-area governmental resources and other suggested resources. (JDD)

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY:

IT DOESN'T MAKE THE GRADE

The Governor's Office on Women's Issues, Massachusetts

October 1989

HE 024 146

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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INTRODUCTION

The Governor's Office on Women's Issues has developed this resource guide to assist members of the Massachusetts university community handle sexual harassment complaints. The guide outlines what constitutes sexual harassment, suggested responses to sexual harassment, and lists resources.

In the course of preparing this guide, it became clear that sexual harassment is a wide-spread problem on many campuses. Many forms of sexual harassment are very subtle, and peer pressure and academic pressure often hindered a victim from reporting an incident. We are encouraged that most universities recognize that a strong policy and an accessible grievance procedure will assist those who are being harassed.

We also discovered that many universities now provide students with written materials on sexual harassment. Public education is strongly encouraged for all members of the university community so that a concerted effort to eliminate sexual harassment can be initiated. Increased education may prevent incidences of sexual harassment.

We encourage students, faculty, and staff to find out about the sexual harassment policy and procedures your university has established. If your university does not have any, you should contact the dean of students, dean of faculty, or the appropriate administrator at your university.

Hopefully, by using this guide, students and employees will work and study in an environment free from sexual harassment.

The information in this guide is intended to assist individuals and should not be construed as legal advice.

A. WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment is an abuse of power which demeans a woman * and interferes with her ability to work or participate in an educational setting. Under Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 151B, Section 4(1) and Section 16A, sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is illegal. "Sexual harassment" includes:

> "sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical conduct of a sexual nature when
> (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for education or employment decisions;
> (b) such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with work performance;
> (c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive educational, employment, or living environment."

If a university employee is being harassed, she has the option of filing a complaint under Massachusetts anti-discrimination laws. In addition, in 1986, the Massachusetts General Laws were amended enabling a student to file a complaint and thereby have the same rights as employees.

Blatant forms of sexual harassment include sexual propositions, inappropriate touching, unsolicited embracing or kissing, and assault or rape. Subtle behavior includes inappropriate or obscene jokes, intimate language such as "dear, sweetheart, darling", and leering. Sexual harassment can be blatant or it can be very subtle behavior. All forms of sexual harassment cause the victim to feel uncomfortable or threatened by the behavior, and may cause the victim to fear retaliation such as the loss of a job or poor grades.

Victims of sexual harassment may experience physical and emotional reactions to the behavior. Anger, depression, self-blame, denial, and decreased self-esteem are common reactions to sexual harassment. Headaches, stomach disorders, inability to concentrate, insomnia, and backaches are sometimes experienced as symptoms of the stress that a victim feels.

* The use of the feminine and the masculine throughout the text are meant interchangeably. The person being harassed and the harasser can be of either sex, although the overwhelming majority of instances involve a woman being harassed by a man.

While the target of the harassing behavior is most directly affected, the university, the harasser, and members of the university community are also affected. If the sexual harassment charges become known outside of the university, a negative public perception may develop. The administration's inaction and / or tolerance of sexual harassment establishes a negative environment and sends a signal that sexual harassment complaints are not taken seriously. Prospective faculty, staff and students who are aware of a sexual harassment incident and the university's response may in part make employment or admission decisions based on the response. Sexual harassment also affects the harasser, and may ultimately result in disciplinary action which could include demotion.

B. HARASSMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY: WHO IS HARASSED?

The university setting is a diverse community comprised of undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, staff, administrative officers, researchers, and visiting scholars. Within the university community are international students and students of diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Sexual harassment can be experienced by any or all of these populations.

Faculty/ Student Harassment

The majority of sexual harassment cases in the academic setting involve a female student being harassed by a male faculty member or administrator. Men are also harassed by women, and a person can be harassed by a person of the same sex.

University students are a transient population: undergraduates usually spend four years at the institution, while graduate students are enrolled on average from one to five years. Students who are harassed may not take action against the harasser if they will be graduating or if the school year is near completion.

Students who are sexually harassed often feel vulnerable and uncertain about how to handle the situation. Many are developing a self-identity and are experiencing independence for the first time. Unless a student has friends or professors that she trusts, she may feel isolated. Occasionally, peers may not be sensitive to the seriousness of sexual harassment and may suggest that the student ignore the behavior.

As many students are concerned about their grades, they may be reluctant to file sexual harassment charges against a professor. If that professor is an advisor, mentor, or teaches a course of particular interest to a student, a student may decide to change her course of study to avoid the harassment or may opt to somehow "deal with" the harassment.

Graduate students often experience particular difficulties, as they work closely with an individual professor. Whereas undergraduate students have the option of changing courses while still being able to pursue their majors, graduate students usually do not have such flexibility. Graduate students often rely heavily on faculty recommendations to get a job. If a student relies on a recommendation from a professor who is harassing her, she may not choose to bring sexual harassment charges to the administration.

Employer/ Employee Harassment

Faculty, administrators and staff are at the university in an employment capacity. In addition to the range of emotions that all victims of sexual harassment experience, those in an employment situation may feel that their economic security is threatened.

Women of all ages, races, and economic backgrounds can be victims of sexual harassment. Professors, deans, and administrative assistants have all reported sexual harassment. Those in an employment situation often experience stress which affects their work habits. Some victims of sexual harassment take more sick time to avoid the harasser or become ill as the result of stress-related illnesses such as backaches, ulcers, or migraine headaches. Many victims become depressed and may withdraw from their co-workers.

Peer Harassment

In recent years, there has been an increase in reports of racial and sexual harassment among peers. Peer harassment is a form of unwanted sexual attention often used to exhibit power or to create an image of power among peers. Sexist jokes, remarks, whistling, unsolicited touching, and physical assault are all forms of peer sexual harassment. Peer harassment usually involves male students harassing female students, though an individual may harass a member of the same sex or harassment may be directed against homosexuals.

Most reported sexual harassment consists of sexist comments, jokes, and innuendoes. The most extreme form of peer harassment is rape, including "date" or "acquaintance" rape. Such incidences have received increased media attention in the past few years. The results of a recent survey indicate that one in four college women will be the victim of rape or attempted rape, and that one of every fifteen men either had raped someone or tried to commit rape.*

Peer harassment causes the victim to feel angry, confused, frightened, and/or guilty. Some victims of peer harassment express fear for their personal safety, as many students live in dormitories, often in close proximity to the harasser.

While the effects of peer harassment are often as serious as the effects of harassment by a faculty member or university administrator, many universities have only recently implemented appropriate administrative channels to handle complaints. Some universities handle peer harassment charges in the same manner as any sexual harassment allegation, while others have specialized procedures coordinated by the dean of students.

* "Campus rape 'extremely serious problem'..." U. (The National College Newspaper) April, 1989 Volume 2, p.1.

C. CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES

The presence of international students and faculty enhances the university's diversity and enriches the learning environment for everyone. The experience of studying at an American university is often rewarding and challenging for the international student. However, the change can be confusing and isolating at times, as language and cultural barriers often make communication difficult.

As sexual harassment is an abuse of power often directed towards a particularly vulnerable individual, international students are sometimes singled out. International students may feel uncomfortable utilizing university administrative channels, particularly if the designated administrator is perceived as being insensitive or is of the same cultural background as the harasser.

International students who are harassed are often reluctant or afraid to report the incident. In some cultures, a sexual harassment incident might cause great shame, loss of honor, and/or self-blame. The discussion of any type of sexual activity may be contrary to cultural norms. The role of women in a culture may affect the reporting of the incident, as many women are conditioned to contain their anger and to be passive, or to believe that they have caused the situation.

It is recommended that the university appoint people of color and individuals from other cultures as sexual harassment officers. In addition, the designated sexual harassment officers should receive sensitivity training on the needs of international students.

Brown University reported a significant increase in the reporting of sexual harassment cases when the personnel office was augmented by hiring ethnically diverse staff. Many attributed the increased reporting to the show of administrative support and sensitivity to the concerns of ethnically diverse students.

D. RESPONSES TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Most universities have now implemented sexual harassment policies which include a grievance procedure for handling allegations. Many institutions offer an individual formal or informal channels to resolve the situation.

If you are a faculty or staff member, you may have an administrative process different from the students' procedures. Many university personnel offices handle non-student complaints, while some universities offer the same options to all members of the university community.

One of the most important steps to take if you are being sexually harassed is to confront the harasser. This is often very difficult, as the harasser may intimidate and/or frighten you. In addition, the harasser may have significant influence over your grades, your status/tenure, or your economic situation. However, many incidences of sexual harassment cease when the harasser was immediately confronted. Sexual harassment rarely ceases if the behavior is ignored. By expressing your reaction to the incident at the outset, you are not only attempting to educate the harasser but you are also empowering yourself.

The following guidelines reflect common procedures for bringing a sexual harassment complaint. If your university does not have a grievance procedure in place, bring it to the attention of your dean of students or the appropriate office.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

1. TALK TO THE HARASSER

   - At the outset, clearly and firmly tell the harasser that his behavior is offensive and inappropriate and creates an intimidating environment for you. Stress that you are not interested in his suggestions, and that you want the behavior to stop immediately.
   - Label the harasser's behavior as it happens. Sometimes, a harasser may say that the woman did not tell him he was doing anything wrong. You need to firmly say, "That's harassment and it is interfering with my work/ studies, etc."
   - Let the harasser know that you will take further action if the behavior does not stop.

2. RECORD THE INCIDENT

   - Document the incident as precisely as possible. Include names, times, location, and any specific phrases. It is important to note whether there were any witnessess.
   - Describe any physical or emotional reactions you had to the incident.
   - Maintain this information on your own paper, separate from a personal journal. Keep the record at your home.
   - If you cannot speak to the harasser, you can write a letter and hand it to him personally in the presence of a witness.
   - If you have spoken to the harasser, write a memo summarizing your conversation. Hand-deliver the memo in the presence of a witness.

3. TALK WITH YOUR SEXUAL HARASSMENT OFFICER

- o Report to your university's designated sexual harassment officer if the harassment continues. This individual has been trained to handle sexual harassment allegations and has the authority to resolve the situation. Your university may have more than one designated officer: research the formal and informal complaint procedures and determine which channel to pursue. If all officers have equal authority at the intake phase, speak with the person with whom you feel most comfortable. Discuss the incident(s) and any actions that you have taken. The office will then conduct an investigation. Note: If your university does not have a sexual harassment officer, contact your personnel office/ dean of students to determine the proper channels.

4. BUILD A SUPPORT NETWORK

- o Request written statements from witnesses.

5. TALK TO YOUR UNION (in employer situation only)

- o Discuss the situation with your union representative or steward.
- o Present the representative with a copy of your documentation.
- o Check your contract provisions for any time restrictions for filing a complaint. Some contracts include language on the time frame for filing a grievance from the alleged act or occurrence.

6. PROCEED TO THE NEXT LEVEL IF NECESSARY

- o If the officer fails to take action, take your complaint to the next level. Identify the proper person at your university and give that person a copy of your documentation.
- o Record the names of all the individuals that you have spoken with, and what actions they took. Include specifics: names, dates and times.

7. FILE A COMPLAINT IF NECESSARY

- o It is advisable to attempt to first resolve the situation through the internal procedures at your university.
- o If the university does not take any action to stop the harassment, or if you are dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, file a complaint with one of the government agencies listed in the Resources section of this guide.
- o You may also wish to file a civil lawsuit in state or federal court. If so, in Massachusetts you must first file at either the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) before going to court. The Boston Human Rights Commission takes complaints and informally negotiates settlements. Please see the Government Resources section of this handbook for more information.

E. UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITY

Universities have a responsibility to ensure that students have equal access to educational opportunities at the campus and that employees work in a setting free from harassment. All forms of discrimination hinder a person from obtaining the fullest benefits from their environment.

Faculty/ Student Harassment

Universities have responded to new legal requirements by developing policies and grievance procedures. Many university policies offer complainants the opportunity to proceed through an informal or a formal process, and some universities have different complaint procedures for students and non-students. In addition, many institutions designate appropriate resource people to handle sexual harassment concerns. If your university does not have a sexual harassment policy, you may want to consider the following guidelines:

1. Ensure that all members of the university have access to a grievance procedure. Allegations of peer harassment should also be covered.

2. Indicate that sexual harassment is illegal and will not be tolerated.

3. Maintain confidentiality and guarantee the privacy of the complainant.

4. Designate several individuals as sexual harassment officers, preferably representing different populations and administrative functions. Some suggested representatives are: the dean of faculty, the dean of students, the director of the Women's Center/Women's Programs, students, the Title IX Coordinator, the affirmative action officer, and the dean for coeducation. The designated individuals should receive training.

5. Provide some accommodations for the complainant while the incident is being investigated and/or resolved. For example, if a student is taking an examination administered by the alleged harasser, make arrangements to have the examination reviewed if there is a problem with the grade, or arrange to have another instructor do the grading.

6. Publicize the sexual harassment policy and grievance procedure, as well as the names and phone numbers of designated sexual harassment officers. This should be done during orientation for new students and through a campus mailing. Students, faculty, and staff should all receive these materials.

7. Run training programs for all employees, staff and faculty to heighten their awareness regarding what constitutes sexual harassment.

University professors can also assist in the university's efforts by discussing sexual harassment in the classroom. In a business education journal, it was stated that "..while not a pleasant issue for business teachers to address, sexual harassment does occur in both the school and work environments. For this reason, candid information about sexual harassment should be integrated into every business education curriculum. It is never too early to start helping students develop plans of action to deal with this problem."*

In addition to having a policy prohibiting sexual harassment, some universities have developed policy statements defining inappropriate behavior between a faculty member and a student. As an example, the Massachusetts State Colleges have adopted the following:

> "Under the policy of the Massachusetts State Colleges, consenting romantic and sexual relationships between faculty and student, administrator and student or supervisor and employee are deemed unprofessional. Because such relationships interfere with or impair required professional responsibilities, they are looked upon with disfavor and are discouraged under this Policy... The respect and trust accorded a professor in giving praise or blame, grades, recommendations for further study and employment, and other benefits or opportunities diminish the student's actual freedom of choice such that relationships thought to be consensual may in fact be the product of implicit coercion..." **

Peer Harassment

Peer harassment is sometimes mistakenly perceived as the normal interaction between young men and women. Appropriate university administrators must take proactive measures to indicate that peer harassment is unacceptable. Such measures might include:

1. Developing a policy stating that peer harassment is a form of sexual harassment which will not be tolerated. It should be stated that proper disciplinary measures will be taken if a university investigation reveals that a charge has merit. **This policy should be distributed to all incoming students.**

2. Informing students about the appropriate university resources for answering questions or filing charges of peer harassment during orientation. **This information should also be disseminated through written materials sent to all students.**

*"Sexual Harassment: A Topic for Basic Business Class", Caudill, Donald W., Lester, Rick A., and Carrington, Max R. Business Education Forum, Vol. 42,#3, December 1987, p. 12.

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts - State Colleges: Affirmative Action/ Equal Opportunity Plan, July 1, 1989

3. Coordinating periodic discussion groups on peer harassment.

4. Providing information and sensitivity training to resident assistants.

While it is critical for the university to implement policies to handle peer harassment charges, it is important that students assist in such efforts. Peer harassment may be perpetuated by students' acceptance or lack of disapproval of such conduct. It is therefore important to offer public education to the entire university community. Students should be encouraged to assist in the elimination of all forms of harassment.

F. PUBLIC EDUCATION

Increased attention in the media has caused a greater awareness of the serious consequences of sexual harassment. Institutions of higher learning must sensitize the campus community to the issue of sexual harassment and must provide public education programs to inform individuals of university policies and resources. Universities often rightfully develop materials for victims of sexual harassment. However, it is also important that potential harassers be educated since such behavior can often be prevented if a person is sensitized to the issue of sexual harassment. In addition, harassers may not be aware of the effects of their behavior or why they harass if they are solely reprimanded. Universities should consider offering counseling sessions and/ or discussion groups for harassers.

Many university women's centers and student services' offices have developed pamphlets describing the assistance available to students. However, few universities offer public education materials to all members of its community. It is crucial that the institution indicate its support to all members of the campus community who feel that they are being sexually harassed.

Public education serves two important functions: first, the university community is informed about the subject and the available resources; and second, potential incidences of sexual harassment can be avoided by raising awareness of the subject.

The distribution of written materials can be supplemented with presentations and discussion groups. Questions should be encouraged at a workshop, but it is important to offer individuals the opportunity to ask questions in a private setting. Some universities offer peer counseling discussions presented by the women's center, the dean of students, or organized by students. The university can assist student peer counseling groups by offering office space and by providing a faculty advisor or counselor. Such informal sessions for staff, faculty, and administrators should also be supported.

EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SAMPLE RESOLUTIONS*

Example I:

Jane A., a senior history major, is applying for graduate school. She completed a major research project during her junior year under the guidance of Professor John S., the chair of the history department. Jane and John S. met twice a week to review her research during this time. Shortly into her senior year Jane asks John S. for a letter of recommendation. John S. said that he would gladly write the letter if she would have dinner with him to discuss her future plans. He states that after working so hard on the research project he would like to get to know Jane more intimately. Jane feels very uncomfortable but agrees, as she needs the recommendation.

Resolution:

Jane speaks with her dorm's resident assistant (R.A.), who talks to her about sexual harassment. Jane and the R.A. go to the Dean of the Faculty and tell her about the incident. The Dean calls John S. and talks with him about the quality of Jane's research. The Dean asks John to prepare a recommendation highlighting his comments on her research, and states that Jane has indicated that she will not be going to dinner with him at any time. The Dean verbally warns the professor that his behavior is unacceptable, he receives materials on sexual harassment, and is told that further incidents of this type will result in disciplinary action which could include his termination of employment.

Example II:

Tom T. is a staff member at the university's faculty cafeteria. He has recently started at the university after having been unemployed. Susan H., a senior faculty member, whistles at Tom when she has lunch at the cafeteria. She makes remarks about his body, and she touches him when no one sees. Mary B., a junior faculty member in the same department, witnesses Susan touching Tom inappropriately. Susan notices Mary and laughingly states that they're good friends and just having fun. Tom, however, looks humiliated and frightened.

Resolution:

Tom reports the harassment to the university personnel office. The sexual harassment officer interviews Mary B., who says that she won't discuss the incident as she is worried about potential repercussions. The officer assures Mary that it is illegal to retaliate against an employee who is involved with a sexual harassment complaint. Susan H. receives a written reprimand for her personnel file, and she is suspended for 2 weeks.

* The names used have been fabricated. In addition, these are sample resolutions based upon actual and simulated cases. Resolutions are determined on a case by case basis - these are recommended actions. Actual resolutions may be more or less stringent than those listed above.

Example III:

Mike M., a graduate student employed as a teaching assistant, has class twice weekly and schedules weekly tutoring sessions by appointment. Joe J., a student in the class, requests an appointment and Mike suggests that Joe come to Mike's dormitory room. Joe attends the appointment, and towards the end of the session Mike makes suggestive remarks. After Joe firmly declines Mike's advances, Mike physically assaults Joe.

Resolution:

Joe is reluctant to tell anyone about the incident, as he is afraid of their reaction. Barbara W., a friend, notices Joe's bruises and they discuss what happened. Barbara encourages Joe to file a complaint against Mike. Mike is dismissed from the university.

Example IV:

Julie G. and Bonnie V. are the only women in a political science seminar class. Professor Bill M. often tells sexist jokes which disturb Julie but don't seem to bother Bonnie. Julie feels very uncomfortable in class and contemplates dropping the course.

Resolution:

Julie speaks with the director of the campus Women's Center, who suggests that Julie write a letter to Bill M. Julie hands him a copy of the letter and keeps the original for her records. The jokes become worse and more personalized. Julie files an informal complaint with the Dean of Students. Bill M. is told to immediately stop the behavior, to send a written apology to Julie G., and he receives a written warning for his personnel file. In addition, the chair of the political science department will review any of Julie's work that needs to be graded.

GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

Boston Human Rights Commission
Boston City Hall, Room 716
Boston, MA 02201
(617) 725-3562
Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday throught Friday (other times by special arrangement)

Procedure: The Human Rights Commission investigates complaints and resolves them through negotiations if possible. An individual should first call the Commission and speak with an Investigator. The Investigator will determine whether the complaint can be handled through the Commission's office, and if it can, it will be assigned to an Investigator. The Investigator will then schedule an intake session. The individual will file a written complaint, which is notarized and a copy sent to the alleged harasser. An investigation is conducted, after which the commission will issue a finding of 1) Probable cause, or 2) lack of probable couse that discrimination has occurred. That finding may be appealed. If probable cause is determined, the case may then be settled, mediated, or brought to a public hearing. If the person is dissatisfied with the commission's finding, s/ he can file with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
Costs: No fee for filing a complaint.
Eligible for assistance: Any person employed in the City of Boston; any student enrolled in a university located in Boston.
Right to sue letter: The Boston Human Rights Commission is not authorized to issue a right to sue letter.

NOTE: You will notice that some agencies are authorized to issue a right-to-sue letter. Massachusetts law requires that an individual first go through the administrative process before turning to the legal system. The administrative agency will issue a right-to-sue letter which enables you to file in court.

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Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
John F. Kennedy Building, Room 409B
Boston, MA 02203
(617) 565-3200
Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

Procedure: The individual must fill out a written complaint, which is then reviewed by an Equal Employment specialist. The specialist will interview other parties involved (e.g., the accused harasser, witnesses, etc.) and will attempt to resolve the situation. Investigations may be conducted without direct interaction between the accuser and the accused. The office issues one of the following findings: 1) cause; 2) no cause. Formal conciliation follows a cause determination. If the person filing the complaint is dissatisfied with E.E.O.C.'s finding, s/ he can file a complaint in federal district court.
Costs: No fee for filing a complaint or for legal services.
Eligible for Assistance: Any employee in the Boston area working at an office comprised of 15 or more employees, or at an employment agency or labor union, and the incident must have occurred no more than 300 days prior to the filing date.
Right to sue letter: Will be issued on request after 180 days from the date the charge is filed or automatically following a no cause determination.

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)
1 Ashburton Place (McCormack Building), Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 727-3990
Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

Procedure: MCAD serves as a neutral fact-finding agency, which attempts to mediate between the two parties. The individual must file a written and notarized complaint, which is then reviewed by an MCAD investigator. After completing an investigation, MCAD issues a preliminary finding of 1) probable cause; or 2) lack of probable cause that discrimination has occurred. If probable cause is found, the case is assigned to an attorney in MCAD's legal department for conciliation and settlement efforts. If conciliation efforts are unsuccessful, the case is certified for a public hearing. A Commission attorney will be assigned to represent you at the hearing if you don't have private counsel. The hearing is held before a neutral hearing commissioner who issues a written decision. An appeal of that decision may be brought to the full Commission, which also issues a written decision. That decision may then be appealed to the Superior Court.
Costs: No fee for filing a complaint. No attorney's fees.
Eligible for Assistance: Any individual in the public or private sector **excluding** Federal government employees, and employees who work for an employer with less than 6 employees.
Time Deadlines for Filing: A complaint must be filed with the Commission within six months of the alleged discriminatory act. A court complaint may be filed within three years of the alleged discrimination, but you must file at the commission before proceeding to Court.
Court filing: Permission to remove a case to state court must be requested from the Commission within the first ninety (90) days of filing. After 90 days, permission is not required, but you must notify the Commission that you have filed in court.
Right to sue letter: Can be issued at any time.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

The following are suggested resource people at your university:

Affirmative Action Officer
Equal Employment Opportunity (E.E.O.) Officer
Dean of Students/ Student Services
Personnel Office
Union representatives
Dean for Coeducation
Director of the Women's Center
Dean of Faculty
Resident Assistant
University Attorney

If you would like more information on sexual harassment, the following organizations can assist you:

Everywomen's Center
Wilder Hall
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003
(413) 585-0883

* Multi-service center providing information and assistance to women in Western Massachusetts.

Governor's Office on Women's Issues
State House, Room 109A
Boston, MA 02133
(617) 727-7853

* Advisory office to the Governor. Develops programs which promote the economic and social well-being of women throughout the Commonwealth.

Massachusetts Women's Equity Action League (W.E.A.L.)
P.O. Box 1214
Cambridge,MA 02238
(617) 254-1729

* Membership organization advancing economic equity for women.